

In some, it is 10 percent, up to 17 percent growth rates per year.

These reforms advance America's many interests in Africa. It is very important when we think about this to realize that, realistically, the U.S. could not isolate itself from a 21st Century where Africa is suffering with increased war and social upheaval and environmental degradation or international terrorism and drug trafficking.

Growing economic means for Africa is an antidote for this scenario, translating into improved educational and health services, better environmental protections and greater social stability.

President Museveni said that to meet all of the health and education needs of Uganda, they would have to build the tax base through economic reforms and introduce free enterprise. That is exactly what they have done, with very positive results.

So recovering African economies already offer the U.S. significant commercial opportunities. While African countries are still in the early stages of economic reform, America's growing exports, exports to Africa already total \$6 billion per year. That supports 100,000 American jobs. American investment on the continent is increasing. American corporations, looking beyond the headlines of civil strife, are clearly recognizing opportunities in Africa.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act would strengthen these positive trends by putting Africa more firmly on the trade and investment map. This legislation would encourage qualifying African countries in annual, high-level trade forums, modeled after forums the U.S. holds with other regions of the world, to continue along this route of reducing tariffs and reforming the economy. These forums would have symbolic value, demonstrating that the world's most powerful economy takes Africa's economic development seriously.

American exporters and investors stand to benefit by the African Growth and Opportunity Act. Qualifying African countries would be reducing barriers to American goods and investment, including reducing tariffs and regulatory burdens and protecting private property. In other words, this legislation treats trade and investment as a two-way street.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act has received strong support from American businesses, particularly those already engaged in Africa and aware of the opportunities. There should be a sense of urgency about the African Growth and Opportunity Act. There should be a sense of urgency about Africa itself.

While several African countries are making encouraging economic progress, others are not. Africa's share of world trade and developing world foreign direct investment is small. Unless these trends are reversed, Africa

runs a real risk of becoming economically irrelevant. I urge passage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

AGOA promises to make Africa more relevant to the world economy. That is why it enjoys the support of virtually every African country.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act is not a panacea for Africa's many challenges. But it would help.

While modest from an American perspective, AGOA promises tangible benefits and a psychological boost to those African countries wishing to become economic partners with the U.S.

This is the least we can do for countries fighting their best against the continent's economic marginalization, and worse.

Having encouraged difficult market-opening reforms, denying greater market access for a modest amount of African goods disrespects our many interests in Africa.

It is also indefensible policy toward the world's poorest continent just as it is developing some momentum.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this Act when it reaches the House floor.

CHINESE ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday, I came to the floor to speak about the escalating rush of illegal immigrants coming from the People's Republic of China directly into Guam. Just within the past week, another 257 more illegal immigrants coming from the People's Republic were apprehended at sea and brought to shore.

Last Thursday, on April 15, 152 Chinese nationals suspected of trying to enter Guam were interdicted by the U.S. Coast Guard. Fortunately, as a result of the efforts of my office, the governor's office, and I think a sensible policy pursued by the White House, and the cooperation of the government of the Northern Marianas, this vessel, instead of being taken to Guam, was taken to the Northern Marianas, where it was assumed because of the differing laws which are applicable to the Commonwealth, these nationals of the People's Republic of China will be more easily repatriated back to China.

Immediately after that vessel was detained, another vessel carrying 105 nationals from the People's Republic of China docked at Apra Harbor on Guam. This was yet the largest single apprehension on Guam, with 34 women and at least 6 juveniles.

According to the INS, the number of apprehended illegal immigrants from the People's Republic caught on Guam since January this year is now up to 585. As I have informed the House before and people of this country, these immigrants are coming directly from Fukien Province, are paying crime syndicates anywhere from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to ship them to the United States.

Guam being the closest American territory, these criminal organizations then funnel them right into our island, and we are now experiencing boat landings nearly every 2 to 4 days.

Upon arrival, these people who are being sent to Guam by criminal organizations are eventually apprehended by primarily local officials, turned over to Federal officials, and they are expected to apply for some form of asylum.

Mr. Speaker, what we see here is a clear exploitation of INA, the Immigration and Naturalization Act, as it is applicable to Guam, by Chinese crime syndicates. Chinese nationals who succeed in finding employment inside the United States, who have come to this dream, are actually turned into indentured servants with no legal papers and immense debts to pay. They continue to pay off these Chinese crime syndicates, even after they are in the United States, for well over a decade. This is a criminal activity which must end.

Now we have this humanitarian crisis on the high seas. It takes approximately anywhere from 10 to 15 days on these decrepit vessels, which are expected to simply take a one-way trip from Fukien Province in China.

This has created a number of crises on Guam. It has created a resource crisis. The INS does not have any funds to attend to these, so it has been left up to the government of Guam to feed them, house them, and clothe them. Now over 400 Chinese nationals are currently being housed in a Guam facility with a capacity of 150 at a cost of approximately \$97 per immigrant per day.

The government of Guam estimates that the total expense for apprehending, staffing, housing, and detaining these illegal immigrants from the People's Republic has cost the people of Guam nearly \$2.5 million. This is a Federal responsibility. No State in the Union would put up with this.

There is also a potential environmental crisis as these boats deliberately run aground on our reefs. There is also a potential health crisis. In one shipment of these illegal immigrants, well over half of the illegal immigrants were tested positive for TB.

Over the past few days, I have had several meetings, including officials at the Department of Justice, officials in the National Security Council and the White House, and I am happy to report that they have taken some action on this. But the Federal Government needs to take clearly more responsibility over this.

It is very interesting to note that, as widely reported in the news about 2½ weeks ago, Guam was considered a possible destination point for Kosovar refugees. It was estimated that Guam may have to house as many as 5,000 to 10,000 Kosovar refugees.

Everyone willingly acknowledged that the Federal Government would be responsible for such an eventuality on Guam. Yet, in this particular instance where we are talking about 400 illegal

Chinese immigrants for a Federal responsibility, the Federal Government today has not paid the government of Guam and is now only beginning to become engaged in the process.

I urge my colleagues to take a good look at this issue. I have introduced H.R. 945 to address the issue of the applicability of the INA to Guam.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2:00 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2:00 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PEASE) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Here in the peaceful beauty of this place, we remember those who at this moment experience the stress of conflict and know not the peace that we enjoy. In our prayer we bring to mind the men and women who face risk this day in a far off land.

We remember all who suffer and know the travail of hunger and violence. We commend those who care for the refugee and the homeless, those who give food to the hungry and shelter to those in great need.

We earnestly pray for resolution to the conflict, a resolution, as the Scripture says, where justice will flow down as waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

You have promised in Your word, O gracious God, that Your spirit abides with each one, and we pray this day that Your spirit will abide with us and with every person, whatever their place or special need. In Your name we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

DISPENSING WITH CALL OF PRIVATE CALENDAR ON TODAY

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous concept to dispense with the call of the Private Calendar today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nevada?

There was no objection.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 800, EDUCATION FLEXIBILITY PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 1999

Mr. GOODLING submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 800) to provide for education flexibility partnerships:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 106-100)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 800), to provide for education flexibility partnerships, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) States differ substantially in demographics, in school governance, and in school finance and funding. The administrative and funding mechanisms that help schools in 1 State improve may not prove successful in other States.

(2) Although the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and other Federal education statutes afford flexibility to State educational agencies and local educational agencies in implementing Federal programs, certain requirements of Federal education statutes or regulations may impede local efforts to reform and improve education.

(3) By granting waivers of certain statutory and regulatory requirements, the Federal Government can remove impediments for local educational agencies in implementing educational reforms and raising the achievement levels of all children.

(4) State educational agencies are closer to local school systems, implement statewide educational reforms with both Federal and State funds, and are responsible for maintaining accountability for local activities consistent with State standards and assessment systems. Therefore, State educational agencies are often in the best position to align waivers of Federal and State requirements with State and local initiatives.

(5) The Education Flexibility Partnership Demonstration Act allows State educational agencies the flexibility to waive certain Federal requirements, along with related State requirements, but allows only 12 States to qualify for such waivers.

(6) Expansion of waiver authority will allow for the waiver of statutory and regulatory requirements that impede implementation of State and local educational improvement plans, or that unnecessarily burden program administra-

tion, while maintaining the intent and purposes of affected programs, such as the important focus on improving mathematics and science performance under title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development Program), and maintaining such fundamental requirements as those relating to civil rights, educational equity, and accountability.

(7) To achieve the State goals for the education of children in the State, the focus must be on results in raising the achievement of all students, not process.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY; STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY; OUTLYING AREA.—The terms "local educational agency", "State educational agency", and "outlying area" have the meanings given the terms in section 14101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

(2) ELIGIBLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREA; SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREA.—The terms "eligible school attendance area" and "school attendance area" have the meanings given the terms in section 1113(a)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Education.

(4) STATE.—The term "State" means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and each outlying area.

SEC. 4. EDUCATION FLEXIBILITY PARTNERSHIP.

(a) EDUCATIONAL FLEXIBILITY PROGRAM.—

(1) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may carry out an educational flexibility program under which the Secretary authorizes a State educational agency that serves an eligible State to waive statutory or regulatory requirements applicable to 1 or more programs described in subsection (b), other than requirements described in subsection (c), for any local educational agency or school within the State.

(B) DESIGNATION.—Each eligible State participating in the program described in subparagraph (A) shall be known as an "Ed-Flex Partnership State".

(2) ELIGIBLE STATE.—For the purpose of this section the term "eligible State" means a State that—

(A) has—

(i) developed and implemented the challenging State content standards, challenging State student performance standards, and aligned assessments described in section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and for which local educational agencies in the State are producing the individual school performance profiles required by section 1116(a)(3) of such Act; or

(ii)(I) developed and implemented the content standards described in clause (i);

(II) developed and implemented interim assessments; and

(III) made substantial progress (as determined by the Secretary) toward developing and implementing the performance standards and final aligned assessments described in clause (i), and toward having local educational agencies in the State produce the profiles described in clause (i);

(B) holds local educational agencies and schools accountable for meeting the educational goals described in the local applications submitted under paragraph (4) and for engaging in technical assistance and corrective actions consistent with section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, for the local educational agencies and schools that do not make adequate yearly progress as described in section 1111(b)(2) of such Act; and

(C) waives State statutory or regulatory requirements relating to education while holding local educational agencies or schools within the State that are affected by such waivers accountable for the performance of the students who are affected by such waivers.